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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1883.

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LEEDS MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

Thursday.

Joachim Raff's oratorio, called in German *Weltende, Gericht, Neue Welt*, but in English *The End of the World*, was produced this morning. The late distinguished composer did not write the work specially for Leeds, but the committee decided to accept it as far back as the early part of last year, when Raff was still living. Indeed, they hoped to see the man, as well as hear his music, an invitation to come over and conduct the oratorio having been offered and accepted. Unhappily, that spoiler of many plans, Death, stepped in. Raff never saw the shores of England, and *The End of the World*, left an orphan, found a foster father in Sir Arthur Sullivan, by whom the performance was this morning most ably conducted. There is something impressive in the fact that the "Swan's Song" of the German musician was one that had the end of all things for its theme.

The oratorio is divided into three parts, as indicated by the German name, and consists of a narrative, partly recited by St. John the Divine, and partly sung in chorus, with an occasional interpolated prayer, or reflection. In the first part we have a description of the Apocalyptic Riders, the Vision of the Martyrs, and a setting forth of the Last Signs in Nature. The second part deals exclusively with the Last Judgment; the third with the New World. Here is, indeed, a theme, in view of which I can only wonder at Raff's temerity. Spohr dared much when in his *Last Things* he confined himself to an expression of the feelings excited by contemplation of the "Great Assize;" but his successor has gone far beyond, and even grappled, as best he could, with the physical phenomena presented by the "wreck of nature and the crash of worlds." I say at once that, so far as the new oratorio is descriptive of these things, it is a failure—sometimes so much a failure as to border on the ridiculous.

Have we here the oratorio of the "Future?" Raff, let us remember, had strong sympathies with what are called "advanced" ideas, and it is just possible—probable, even—that he cherished thoughts of dealing with oratorio on the lines laid down by Wagner for opera. Assuming that *The End of the World* is a type of coming oratorio, let us see what Fate has in store for us. To begin with good news, our present form of chorus and song will not be much interfered with. Raff has certainly let it alone; nay, he has followed its pattern with considerable fidelity. There are in his choruses some passages more freely written than strict orthodoxy would sanction; but, as a rule, the composer adheres to the old contrapuntal model. He evidently thought, when shaping the work in his mind, that no other served so well for united vocal expression. He was right—right in the abstract no less than in his application of the opinion, for *The End of the World* is distinctly and before all a choral success. Many of the concerted numbers are profoundly impressive as well as being able examples of technical skill. I may cite that which ends the first part: "Fall on us," and all those in the third part, more especially the peroration: "Come, yea, come soon, Redeemer," though this is marred by an elaborate fugue episode which, to be effective, requires more extended working, and, perhaps, would have served the oratorio better by complete absence. In all these pieces, however, as well as in some of the very few airs, or ariettes, the composer shows great resource, and an equally remarkable power of impressing the mind and exciting the imagination. Now let us see in what our assumed oratorio of the future will differ from the prevailing type. The solo voice will have little to do. Raff employs only two in *The End of the World*—a baritone (St John) and an impersonal mezzo-soprano, heard in three numbers only. This is a decidedly bad look-out for those vocalists, now young, who have the future before them, with a prospect of living into it. They will not be much wanted, while, if other composers write for them as Raff has done for his baritone, their scanty occupation is certain to prove a burden. I pitied Mr Santley to-day as he struggled through a part bristling with recitatives of the most ungrateful kind, and relieved only by two short airs which had little of beauty to recommend them. Does this music mark the first flow of a tide which is to sweep our oratorio platform clear of all but one or two depressed and humbled vocalists, and turn those into mere declaimers, after the fashion of the "reformed" operatic stage? Heaven forefend! We cannot do in England—though they may in Germany—without the most beautiful of all musical instruments, or without the most flexible, expressive, and artistic form of human utterance. Is it asked what Raff puts in the place of the air and concerted soli? What a superfluous question! As though there could be a moment's doubt as to the course dictated by modern fashion. The orchestra has taken another step forward. It is, among musical things, what Aaron's rod was among the rods of Pharaoh's magicians—it swallows, and presently only itself remains. So here we look for that which is common in oratorio—vocal pieces,

and lo! they are not, but the orchestra is. Will this process go on and reduce voices to almost negation which, musically, is their state in Wagnerian opera? Possibly, for it seems clear that the end is not yet. Let me not be supposed to combat the development of the modern orchestra. That wonderful machine should have its fullest resources brought into play, only, however, in the sphere which is absolutely its own. No thoughtful musician desires to see it annexing realms belonging to another, and attempting to do the work that another can better achieve. Raff's oratorio contains eight orchestral movements besides the introduction, and all of them, by their assumed descriptiveness, enter fully into the argument of the book. They are, or pretend to be, purely pictorial, and their subjects come in order thus: "Pestilence," "War," "Famine," "Death and Hell," the "Last Signs," the "Resurrection," the "Judgment," the "New World." Here, then, we have music employed to convey certain definite ideas on the most terrible, and, some of them, the most unimaginable of themes. How obviously hopeless a task! What conceivable combination of sounds, for example, can suggest Pestilence, or Famine, or Death and Hell, or the Last Signs? The very idea of attempting to do this can only be the result of some twist in a composer's organization—some disease of vision, which presents things to view which are not, never were, and never can be. I grant that some of the subjects above mentioned are capable of, at any rate, musical suggestion. A march rhythm, trumpet passages, flutes and side drums can easily present the bare idea of war; and beautiful music may stir the fancy to conceive the beauty of a new world. Hence in the movements entitled "War" and "New World" the composer appears to advantage, because, even if he do not actually reach his end, he points it out to us. On the other hand, some of the remaining intermezzi are nearly absurd in their agonizing to do that which music is utterly unable to accomplish. This is a result inevitable in all such cases. Wagner charges Beethoven with "stammering" when trying to reach the perfection of musical expression by means of the "tone" apart from the "word." But, if Beethoven stammers, Raff is convulsed and wholly unintelligible. In his striving to be sublime he falls into the ridiculous—Banyan's Pilgrim saw a door of Hell very near the gate of Heaven—and, like a Pythoness of old, he foams at the mouth and becomes inarticulate. For this, I do not accuse him of weakness, only with a, to me, utterly incomprehensible mistake as to the functions of music, and the limit of its powers. I cannot now go into details. The time for those will come later. Enough that the most incongruous and even ridiculous ideas were suggested this morning to the minds of those who sought a reasonable interpretation of what they heard.

The representative theme, or *Leit-motive*, threatens to engraft itself upon the oratorio of the future. Raff has three such themes in *The End of the World*, respectively standing for the Deity, Death, and Hell. It must be said for him that he has employed these with much judgment and effect. They come in at the right moment; there is no difficulty in recognizing them, and they have a genuine eloquence. In other words, the device, abused by Wagner in his later music dramas, is used by Raff, and made to serve him well. A particular example of good service is seen in the intermezzo styled "The Judgment." Here the Deity theme appears given out by the acuter instruments with an ethereal accompaniment of violins in seven parts, and followed by a gently flowing passage of the most suave and tender character. We recognize, so far, the invitation, "Come, ye blessed," and its grateful response. Then the theme in a minor key, and attended by a sombre tremolo for the bass and strings, is heard from graver instruments, followed by the Hell theme, and sharp cries of distress all over the orchestra. The meaning of this is obvious, and I hold the piece to be a singularly happy illustration, entirely due to a dexterous employment of the *Leit-motive*. Here my examination of this work must cease for the present, and it need only be added that *The End of the World* left upon its first English audience a mixed impression, wherein perhaps satisfaction predominated. Besides Mr Santley, the only other solo vocalist was Miss Damian. That accomplished pupil of Mdme Sain-ton-Dolby made a frank success by her refined and sympathetic singing. Nothing could have been better, either in a purely technical or in a high artistic sense, every note being sung with what I may call a sensitiveness that seemed, at the moment, the highest form of beauty. Miss Damian has taken an immense step upward in her profession. The general performance, looking at the immense difficulties of the work, could hardly have been better. Magnificent service was done by the chorus, and the highest credit is due to Sir Arthur Sullivan for an achievement largely the result of his painstaking efforts.

A selection of solos and choruses from the works of Handel followed, in which the choir, delighting to honour the great master, covered itself with glory. The solos were "What tho' I trace,"

capitally sung by Miss Hilda Wilson and much applauded; "Oh, had I Jubal's lyre," in which Miss Annie Marriott proved very successful, and "Deeper and deeper still," entrusted to Mr Maas and by him given with fine effect. Mr Maas is making specially his own the *cheval de bataille* of Braham and Sims Reeves.

The hall, full or nearly so this morning, was crowded at the evening concert, thanks to a programme of high and varied attractions. In the way of novelty we had Mr Barnby's setting of the 97th Psalm, and Bach's "Thou guide of Israel"—*les extremes se touchent*—with which were associated the familiar excellence of Mozart's so-called Third Motet and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. It would be interesting to discover, if that were possible, which of the four compositions had most influence in drawing together so large a crowd. Perhaps the work of the Yorkshire composer, for the great county, though not in Scotland, knows perfectly well what clannishness means; perhaps the sensuous and fascinating beauty of the Italian hymn. Anyhow, the crowd gathered, and a liveliness almost amounting to enthusiasm was the order of the evening. Mr Barnby's Psalm came first, the composer conducting its performance with all the tact that long experience and no small natural aptitude have brought. He was well received by the audience. Better, perhaps, than the good feeling of the audience was that of the chorus, who expended on behalf of the Psalm not only its own share of enthusiasm, but that which last night was steadfastly refused to Mr Cellier's cantata. Fortunate Mr Barnby! Nevertheless, all his success was not due to the incident of birth. The Psalm has very positive merit, in applause of which it is possible for even an unsentimental critic to join. The work contains six movements, the text being divided in accordance with the change of sense, thus the Regal Hymn of the first six verses is treated as a grand chorus, and forms the principal feature. Then comes a bass air, "Confounded be all they that worship images," followed by a soprano solo and chorus of female voices, in three parts, "Zion heard of it and rejoiced;" a contralto air, "Oh, ye that love the Lord;" an orchestral interlude illustrating the text, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" a double quartet, "There is sprung up a light;" and a finale, "Glory be to the Father." Mr Barnby moves about among the "tone families," on very intimate terms, running from one key to another without the ceremony of an introduction. He is even so much at home that he disregards domestic rules, and puts in a sequence of consecutive perfect fifths with a calm assurance that tempers reproof with admiration. Altogether the opening chorus is a fine one, and so in a less but still important degree is the closing "Gloria." I bracket these together because they are both of a triumphal character, in that respect having no associates elsewhere in the Psalm. The "Gloria" consists of an orchestral march joined to a series of semi-declamatory phrases for the voices in unison or harmony. The device is not new, as every musician knows, but Mr Barnby treats it with very great effect, and brings his work to a really exciting end. The intermediate numbers are not so noteworthy. The bass air has two contrasted themes, but obviously suggests Mendelssohn, alike in gross and in detail. Heartier praise is deserved by the solo and chorus, "Zion heard of it," the lightness of its style being more than condoned by grace of treatment, save in one restless and unthankful passage, "Thou art exalted," which the composer should expunge as soon as possible. The contralto air need not detain us, nor can the orchestral interlude be regarded as other than disappointing. It is so short that there ought to be a good deal in it, but I look in vain for more than an assurance that Mr Barnby admires the writings of some contemporary musicians. The double quartet, on the other hand, though a good deal in the part-song style, is quite pleasing. I have already hinted that the performance, as far as concerned the chorus, was a good one. That is true, but not the whole truth; it was nothing less than superb. The well laid out and effective music so enlisted all sympathies that the very best was done by everybody. Miss Marriott, Miss Damian, and Mr King sang the solos, each earning deserved applause. Miss Damian, on this occasion, made another "hit." Uninteresting as is the contralto solo, she nearly obtained for it an encore. The artists just named were assisted in the double quartet by Miss Sellers, Mrs Broughton, Messrs Maas, Palmer, and Taylor. At the close of the work immense applause broke forth, and continued till the composer once or twice returned to the platform. Over the other works in the programme I must pass lightly now, content to say that they were performed in course. So suggestive of remark is this festival that I am compelled to reserve certain matters for a final summary.

Friday.

This morning Sir George Macfarren's new oratorio, *King David*, was produced, and, as though to celebrate the event with fitting

honour, the sun actually shone. For the first time since the proceedings began, some folds of the curtain of cloud and smoke that overhangs Leeds were withdrawn, and Phœbus Apollo smiled cheerfully down. Let us accept the omen for the veteran Cambridge Professor and his work. The greatest possible interest was taken in Sir George Macfarren's oratorio. Leeds is in some sort pledged to the composer. It performed *John the Baptist* at the Festival of 1874, and produced *Joseph* three years later, so that, taking into account the present event, the town has set an example of constancy which, I am sure, its object fully appreciates.

The Professor is, I believe, responsible for the book of the oratorio, and deserves much praise, not only for a judicious selection of Scriptural texts, but for a general plan that enabled him to take no more than a part of his hero's life, and yet avoid any impression of incompleteness. This desirable and, indeed, necessary end has been reached by subordinating the work to the illustration of a fact in human experience and Providential dealing, namely: that if a man sin he cannot escape punishment, though the avenger may be long in coming, and the sinner be highly exalted. This is the main idea of the libretto, coupled with which is another—that the greatest offender may find a place of penitence and obtain pardon. In illustrating these truths, the oratorio opens at the moment when David receives the crown of Israel from the Twelve Tribes. The whilom shepherd is not, however, quite abruptly introduced in this position. By a happy thought, Sir George has made the overture serve for a glance at David's past. It suggests his life in the fields, the call to battle, the singing to "melancholy Saul," that monarch's envy, and finally his death. We are thus prepared to find David on the steps of the throne. The book accentuates his greatness there, and the divine favour shown to him. We see the Ark brought up with rejoicings, and hear Nathan declare in the name of the Lord that his seed shall follow him and be established for ever. The new king modestly asks: "Who am I, O Lord God, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?" but the people accept the prophecy with a distinct reference to that Son of David "of whose kingdom there shall be no end." Having thus placed his hero on an extraordinary eminence of Divine and human favour, Professor Macfarren proceeds to show how even a great and good man may be tempted to his fall. The story of Bathsheba is told, with the murder of Uriah and the anger of the Lord. Here the chorus interposes a prayer—"Remember not, Lord, our offences"—and afterwards Nathan appears with the parable of the ewe lamb, which so kindles David's wrath and is so promptly turned against himself. A dialogue for King and prophet follows—the one sore humbled and repentant, while, so to speak, out of the mouth of the other flashes the sword of justice. "Thou hast killed Uriah with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house." At this stage a reflective contralto song points the moral, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" the chorus following with the threatening words, "Vengeance belongeth unto the Lord, and He will recompense." Thus the first part ends, and leaves the "argument" in a state of suspense. David is under execution; it is for the second part to show when and in what manner execution follows.

The task just pointed out is promptly begun. We hear of Amnon's shameful death at the hand of his brother Absalom, and of the fratricide's flight. Then the Woman of Tekoah comes with her mock grief and trumped-up story. David's heart pleads also for the absent Prince, and a decree of recall goes forth. Immediately there is a scent of treachery and rebellion in the air. Absalom affects royal state with his chariots and his runners, he ingratiates himself with the mob, after the wont of pretenders in every age, and the mob, like mobs at all times, listen and grow ripe for mischief. The rallying cry goes round, but before the rising another contralto solo predicts woe to them that call evil good, and good evil. Of the rebel army we see nothing, but David's adherents counsel a flight beyond Jordan, and their advice is taken. Absalom pursuing, the forces of father and son meet. The King, listening to the prayers of his people, remains near the gate of the city far from the battlefield, and, with compassionate women around him, waits for news of the fight. Messengers arrive from the scene of action. "What of the battle?" cry the people; but all the father speaks in the only question put by the King, "Is the young man, Absalom, safe?" At the last the blow falls, foretold by Nathan long before: "The enemies of our Lord the King, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is." Then goes up to the heavens the well-known cry, "O Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" At first the people sympathise with this excess of grief, but, in a little while, they begin to murmur. "The victory is turned into mourning," they say, and, to David, "Thou hast shamed the faces of all thy

servants. . . . If Absalom had lived and all we had died, then it had pleased thee well." Here a soprano voice teaches the lesson that "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness." This foreshadows all that remains of the argument. The tribes call upon their mourning King to resume the duties of his exalted place, and he humbles himself under the correcting hand of his God. A grand chorus of joy over the repenting sinner closes the work.

I have indicated but an outline of the libretto, but even from that must appear how compact and well-balanced it is. Part answers to part in perfect symmetry. Indeed, a lively fancy may trace in the "argument," the limner's "line of beauty." The curve starts away from the straight, sweeps round, and again falls into the direct path. It represents a complete episode in human experience, and has countless parallels in every age and rank of life.

With regard to the work of the musician, it is scarcely needful for me to state in so many words that Sir George Macfarren has kept substantially to the old lines of oratorio. His vigorous intellect, strengthened by the perfect conviction of long experience, guards him from infection by crude ideas born of a reckless age, which is dissatisfied with the past mainly because the task of maintaining the traditions of the past lies beyond its power. In *King David* we encounter no new-fangled devices; for the association of certain passages with certain ideas is a method employed by the author before the present "advanced" school had either teacher or pupil. As to these "representative themes," Professor Macfarren simply reproduces that which was his property years since. In other respects the work is entirely orthodox. Certain dramatic scenes, such as the interview of Nathan with David, and the awaiting of news from the battle-field, are treated dramatically, but all other numbers are in set form, not running one into another, after the continuous fashion now adopted by many composers, but being like gems on a connecting string, each part of a chain, but each complete in itself. I have never yet learned that such regard for the claims of music as an independent art is incompatible with a poetic connection, and I am now farther than ever from accepting that teaching. The general character of the music is consistent with that of other works from the same hand. Professor Macfarren is not a musical weathercock, shifting his direction as the wind changes. He has an individual style and keeps to it, because, being individual, it serves him best. A certain robustness and directness of utterance, a little occasional angularity, great power both in pathos and passion, some want of delicate expression, immense thoughtfulness and fertility of device, atoning for deficient spontaneity—these are the qualities which amateurs have learned to associate with Professor Macfarren's music. They are not, however, always found to the same extent. In *King David*, for example, robustness and thoughtfulness remain unaffected, but there is an access of tenderness and grace—precisely the qualities most desired, and that do more than any other to give the music a perfect balance. This will best appear, perhaps, from a notice of the more important numbers in order.

The "poetic basis" of the overture has already been stated, but now is the time to speak of it as a work in "form," yet to a reasonable extent independent alike in design and character. It reminds amateurs of the prelude to *St John the Baptist*, there being in it the same clearness of meaning, powerful musicianship, and masculine strength of expression. It is delightfully varied, moreover, passing from a subject pastoral to a subject martial, and from David's placid harping before Saul to the storm of that monarch's passion, with a changeful effect that keeps attention quite alive. The whole overture shows a vigorous fancy and a hand that never relaxes its grasp. I have spoken about an access of gracefulness, and find authority for doing so in a charming reflective chorus, "Behold how good and joyful," while proof of fertility of device not unmingled with a certain quaintness often noticeable in Sir G. Macfarren's oratorios appears in David's first recitative commanding the bringing up of the Ark. Here the sentences are separated by orchestral interludes, each having a phrase of the tune "Old Hundredth" as its bass. Why the "Old Hundredth" should be thus used is not quite obvious, but it secures a measure of interest without the sacrifice of any propriety. A "Psalm at bringing in of the Ark" is an important number, and, musically, very conspicuous, in the first place, for its method of leading utterance and choral response, next, for a peculiar avoidance almost throughout of modulation into the dominant key, that of the sub-dominant being preferred. The result of this last feature is an archaism—so it may be called, for want of a better term—that seems to have been carefully sought by the composer. The whole chorus is impressive. There can arise no doubt about the earnestness of the people who bring up the ark. A graceful soprano air, "The path of the just," next demands notice for a preponderance of the quality with which

I have credited it, and is a beautiful example of the old-fashioned oratorio song, perfect in form and eloquent in the vocal expressiveness which an orchestra sets off, but is not permitted to obscure. The first of David's airs, "Who am I?" introduced a harp accompaniment, henceforth prominent—perhaps too prominent—whenever the King gives like expression to his feelings. Following it comes the people's joyful chorus, "The seed of David is great"—an important number, with a fine organ prelude and a choral exordium, leading to a massive fugue on a diatonic subject. The whole narrative of David and Bathsheba abounds with interest, chiefly, as may be supposed, in its orchestral writing. Certain passages are, indeed, worthy to represent the woman's beauty; others, suggesting the fate of Uriah, are instinct with the spirit of desperate strife; and yet others, that attend upon the story of the marriage, wail a lament full of ominous portent. All the narrative, in point of fact, is full of careful thought. The prayer, "Remember not, Lord, our offences," takes the form of an unaccompanied chorus, marked by an intense devotional spirit as well as musical beauty. Its significance, I should add, is heightened by the use of a short phrase usually employed in connection with the Litany response, "Spare us, good Lord." Nathan's parable of the ewe lamb sustains the interest thus excited, as does the subsequent dialogue between the King and the Prophet. The contralto solo, "What is a man profited," stands on a lower level, if, indeed, it be not tedious, a result due to Sir George Macfarren's choice of words, which, so far from yearning after music, barely tolerate it. The chorus, "Vengeance belongeth unto the Lord," makes amends, and is one of the grandest numbers in the work. Here the master is in his most vigorous mood, and hurls, so to speak, great masses of sonorous harmony upon the text, investing it with terrible significance. The statement, alternately direct and inverted, of the second subject belongs to the finest order of choral writing.

The second part, opening with a narration of Amnon's murder and Absalom's flight, is preluded by the music accompanying Nathan's sentence in the first part, the mind being thus prepared for the punishment which immediately falls upon David's tenderest affections. Much dramatic force marks the dialogue between the King and the Woman of Tekoah, at the opening of which an ingenious attempt is made to represent a voice broken with grief and agitation, the notes falling singly or in groups of two upon unaccented parts of the bar. Two choruses of a simple character next describe the wiles of Absalom, and an air full of suavity conveys an idea of the rebel Prince's personal address. This is followed by a very dramatic chorus, in which the pretender's spies pass round the rallying cry of their faction, "Absalom reigneth in Hebron." The composer here shows remarkable power, and the number is, in its way, among the finest the oratorio contains. Passing over the contralto air, "Woe unto them that call evil good," with a tribute to its musical force and recognition of the naïveté which hindered the composer from recognizing the ridicule challenged by frequent repetition of the word "Woe," we reach the very fine chorus of David's adherents as they urge their master to fly across Jordan. In this there is the true ring of dramatic truth and energy. Soon afterwards the finest part of the work is entered upon. David pleads for the darling of his heart in strains of great beauty and tenderness, these being followed by an exquisite duet for soprano and contralto, "Like as a father pitieth his own children." I am greatly mistaken if immense popularity be not in store for this music, distinguished in equal degree as it is by grace and tenderness. There is nothing specially elaborate about the duet, but it commands all sympathies. Next comes the fine dramatic scene in which David, with the women around him, awaits tidings from the battle-field. Space does not now serve for a full analysis of this singularly excellent number. It is true to nature and therefore powerful. All can sympathize with the old King, as, abstracted from aught save thoughts of his son, he hears with indifference the news that establishes his reign. "Is the young man, Absalom, safe." The touching question rises higher and higher as messenger after messenger returns from the field of strife. But even more intense, reaching, as I think, the height of pathos and of musical art serving for pathos, is the solo "O! Absalom, my son," and the chorus with which a continuation of it presently blends. Nothing greater than this, to my knowledge, exists in modern oratorio, or is more worthy of a place in line with the finest expressions of intense grief. It is Shaksperian in the sense that it is worthy of King Lear. The soprano air, "Despise not Thou," good though it be, hardly escapes the effect of an anti-climax, while decidedly an anti-climax is the short remainder of the work. It was no doubt necessary to show David's repentance, and indicate his forgiveness, but the oratorio is by just that much too long, and I hope that the composer will see his way to abbreviate it. In doing this, however, he should not touch the final number, but leave out bodily that in which the people call upon David to resume the

active duties of his kingship. This is not wanted, because it stands apart from the course of the argument. To sum up, *King David* is a fine, virile work, brimfull of musicianship, instinct with expressive force, and as the composition of a man seventy years old, and blind, I regard it as simply amazing. The performance this morning was very good, indeed, and creditable exceedingly to Sir Arthur Sullivan and all engaged under him. Mme Valleria, Mme Patey, Mr Lloyd, and Mr Santley were the soloists, each doing his or her very best for a work and a master with whom it is so easy to be in sympathy. Mme Valleria crowned the success of her first festival by singing the soprano music more like a veteran of oratorio than one just entered upon the platform of sacred music. She gave "The path of the just" and the soprano part of the duet in perfect taste and with the highest intelligence. As for the dramatic numbers, it is needless to say that with them the artist was completely at home. Few know better than Mme Valleria how to give due effect to a scene of genuine human interest. She may now persevere in the new course marked out, and do eminent service in a field where there are very few workers of her class. Mme Patey, always excellent in recitative, gave the narratives with great power, and sang the contralto airs so as to make the most of the merit that is in them. Not less praiseworthy was Mr Lloyd, a representative of Absalom as free from artistic fault as the young Hebrew Prince was free from blemish. His delivery of Absalom's song, "O that I were a judge," doubled its charm. Mr Santley, on his part, won an unqualified success. He had an arduous task, but nothing came amiss to him, every song and solo being delivered with the sound judgment and expressive power that makes him the great artist he is. Best of all was his rendering of "O, Absalom, my son!" Here intense natural feeling aided art, and the sympathetic tear—best tribute to the singer's power—started in many an eye. I cannot say that the orchestra was absolutely faultless. Some passages might have been more or less improved by further rehearsal, but the choir sang splendidly, only dropping a little in pitch during the unaccompanied chorus. At the close of the oratorio Sir George Macfarren was led on to the platform by Sir Arthur Sullivan in response to loud calls and applause, and heartily congratulated upon his marked success. The Duke of Albany was not present to join in this tribute. He left after the first part, and returned to Otley.

This evening Gade's *Crusaders* and miscellaneous selections were given. My remarks upon the programme must for the present stand over.

[BY TELEGRAPH.]
(From a Correspondent.)

THIRD DAY.—*King David* triumphantly successful—band and chorus superb—soloists excelled themselves—every seat taken—listened to with most profound attention—scene of glorious enthusiasm at conclusion, passing description. Professor Sir George Macfarren, in an impassioned speech, said that the performance gave him extreme pleasure. He hoped that any transgressions on his part would be forgiven on account of the beautiful singing. He was received rapturously, amidst most hearty cheering, renewed again and again. Sir Arthur Sullivan also spoke, and referred to the necessary fault-finding incidental to the duties of conductor, he said that this should be assigned to musical, and not personal, reasons. Professor Sir George Macfarren, on leaving the room, was followed by the devoted applause of a most excited concourse.

After the conclusion of the oratorio, a meeting was improvised in an adjoining hall, characterized by the most intense enthusiasm. Professor Sir G. A. Macfarren, in a highly impressive speech, thanked all those who had contributed to the success of his work, and assured the chorus-singers that their beautiful singing would be always remembered by him. He, with his usual extreme modesty, said that the sole merit of that important day rested with those whose singing and playing had provoked such universal admiration. After a few words from Mr Broughton, the earnest trainer of the choir, Sir Arthur Sullivan said that although he was not an orator, he wished to tell them how thoroughly he appreciated their efforts. He hoped that they now understood that he had not accepted the office of conductor for the purpose of saying pleasant things to them, but to point out their shortcomings, and that when he found fault it was only with their musical doings, and not with them personally. Professor Sir G. A. Macfarren, when leaving the room on his way from the hall, was the centre of a scene of joyful excitement that baffles description, rendered additionally evident by ringing cheers again and again repeated.

(The foregoing telegrams from other correspondents arrived too late for insertion in our last week's impression.)

Sunday.

The closing day of the Festival showed no abatement of the remarkable public interest which attended all the previous performances. His Royal Highness the President had duty at Huddersfield, and was, therefore, absent, but Yorkshire amateurs needed no princely example to make them flock in crowds to the Town Hall, every seat in that spacious interior being occupied at the morning concert. It is computed that 2,100 persons heard Beethoven's Mass in D and Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*. Here let me point out that the support given to this Festival has steadily grown ever since 1874. At the first celebration the aggregate attendance was 10,056. In 1877 the figures were 11,754; in 1880, 13,057; and during the past week, 13,984. Much further progress cannot be expected. The hall, under Festival arrangements, seats 2,100 persons, and in the course of the seven concerts just given that limit was reached three times—namely, at the performances of *Elijah*, *King David*, and the two great classical works already mentioned. On the remaining four occasions, the audience numbered respectively 1,884 (*Gray's Elegy*); 1,900 (*End of the World*); 2,000 (*Barnby's Psalm*, &c.); and 1,900 (*Gade's Crusaders*). It follows that, had 716 more persons attended, the largest possible support would have been secured. This is a small margin to cover in 1886, and the committee now see the end and crown of the labours they have carried on with such signal success during the last nine years.

In the present notice I have no mention to make of novelty. The Mass in D is known to musicians who have studied it assiduously, and to others no idea can be conveyed by words; while the *Hymn of Praise* ranks among the familiar things of art. Enough, therefore, if I render a tribute of deserved praise to the performance of both masterpieces—to that of the Mass more especially on account of the extraordinary demands made by Beethoven's music. Great interest was felt in the execution of this work. All knew that the chorus had resolved from the first to make it a test of their powers, and that Sir Arthur Sullivan elected to stand or fall, so to speak, by the result attained. Both were right. Choral success in a work so enormously difficult means all the honour that a choir can achieve, while general success implies such distinction for a conductor as cannot be won anyhow else. The outcome in this case was a performance that, taken for all in all, deserves to rank above any other given within my remembrance. That blemishes were observable it would be idle to deny, for the simple reason that skill cannot compass perfection with music which seems to have been written quite regardless of limited human powers. Putting the inevitable aside, all was as good as I ever hope to find it. The chorus hardly made a fault throughout a protracted effort which exacted the utmost, not only from their intelligence, but from their physical means. How they answered demands in the last-named respect, after a week of hard work, is and must remain the wonder of all who heard them. They appeared to have a "reserved force" that could not possibly be exhausted, and they finished the last chorus seemingly as fresh as when they began. Mr Broughton and his choir may be congratulated nearly without reserve upon this masterful display. It was worthy of a body of voices only needing a little more refinement and mastery of delicate nuances to be in all respects the finest in the kingdom—perhaps in the world. The orchestra ably supported the chorus, and the principal singers—Miss Anna Williams, Mme Patey, Mr Lloyd, and Mr Santley—as ably answered for their share of the work. Sir Arthur Sullivan earned much honour as the conductor of so remarkable a performance. It established his position among the *chefs d'orchestre* who are capable of producing the highest artistic results. After the Mass, Mendelssohn's symphony-cantata was comparative child's play. At any rate, the magnificent executive force gave it with an ease, certainty, and effect that left nothing to desire. The final chorus made a great sensation, for in it the singers gathered themselves together for a supreme effort, as though to show that they were competent to go through the week again. In the peroration the high B flat rang out time after time from the untiring sopranos with a sound as clear and true as a trumpet's. The solos, taken by Miss Marriott, Miss Damian, and Mr Lloyd, gave great satisfaction, and complete the *ensemble* as exacting taste would have it. At the close, after "God save the Queen" had been sung, enthusiastic applause broke out from all parts of the hall; audience and performers mutually expressing towards each other and towards the conductor feelings inspired by sympathy with the great success attained.

A concert at popular prices took place in the evening, the hall being again crowded to the doors. As the programme mainly consisted of extracts from the works already heard, I need not dwell upon what was done, further than to say that Sir Arthur Sullivan's overture, *In Memoriam*, gave the audience an excellent opportunity of paying a personal tribute to the composer. The artists who appeared on this occasion were Misses Williams, Marriott, Damian, and Wilson; Messrs Maas, King, and Blower.

Looking back upon the entire Festival, Leeds must be congratulated. The cause of art was worthily sustained, the talents of native composers were triumphantly vindicated, and the resources of the district for a musical celebration of the utmost possible greatness and value were abundantly asserted. This is the conclusion of the whole matter.—D. T.

COVENT GARDEN PROMENADE CONCERTS.

The theatre was attended by a large audience on Wednesday night, when the "classical" part of the programme consisted of Beethoven's Symphony in A (No. 7), and his Romanza in F (for violin); Mendelssohn's Overture to *Ruy Blas*, and his "Rondo Brillante" (Op. 22) for pianoforte with orchestra; Berlioz' "Marche Hongroise" (*Damnation de Faust*), and Saint-Saëns' "Poème Symphonique," ("Danse Macabre")! the vocal pieces being "Zuleika," (Oh ye balmy western breezes"), and Handel's "O ruddier than the cherry," (*Acis and Galatea*), the former sung by Miss Edith Millar, and the last-named by Signor Foli, who was unanimously called upon to repeat it, but he substituted Mozart's "Qui sdegno." Mendelssohn's Rondo was remarkably well played by Miss Clara Asher, a very youthful pianist, who also gave in the second part of the concert Chopin's well-known "Polonaise," and was called back twice to receive well-merited applause.

SONG WRITERS AND THEIR FEES.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—If my remarks under the above heading, and published in your issue of the 29th September, have done no other good, they elicited a very interesting letter from your old and valued contributor, Wellington Guernsey. Decidedly the song "Kathleen Mavourneen" owed much of its popularity to the excellence of the words, and when successful both composer and authoress may have received some recompense. My authority for the remuneration paid for "Mary Blane" was Mr Barker himself, who stated that all that he received for the song in its original form was fifteen shillings. That he may have received ten guineas when its popularity was assured I cannot dispute; and as regards the "The White Squall," Mr Barker also stated to me that he had offered it to at least a dozen publishers, and at length consented to bear part of the expense of publication, and that he did not receive one shilling from Mr Purday at the time; but as regards the renewal of copyrights, that is another matter altogether. Mr C. Glover assured me that he gave his song of "Jeanette and Jeanot" to Mr Charles Jefferys as a present, and any payment he may have received was years afterwards for new arrangements. It does not seem at all likely that Mr Jefferys would pay £40 for a song to be published in an album. Mr Charles Horn's song of "Cherry Ripe" was written, I believe, previous to his first visit to America, and given as a present to his publisher, he told me himself. Whatever gift of spoons he may have received were presented to him after his return to England. The incident of his receiving such a gift points to the fact that his song had become very popular; for publishers do not usually give gifts for works they have already paid for. I may be allowed to remind you that the particulars given in my letter were furnished by the composers themselves, and I cannot perceive, after reading Mr Wellington Guernsey's reply, that there is any positive error in what I have stated. Whatever recompense an author or a composer may receive after he has made a success, has nothing to do with the original sale or gift. I have no doubt that in after years many may have desired to recompense Milton, and would have been pleased to be handed down to posterity as the discoverers of his hidden genius.

I agree with every word that Mr Wellington Guernsey has said about the losses resulting from failures, and that publishers should, sometimes at least, be allowed to reap the reward of their enterprise; but what I do complain of is this. A carpenter is supposed to know something about wood and a shoemaker about leather, and publishers, too, frequently judge of work by the same standard. If it only contains scholarly writing, although it has not in it one particle of originality, it has a better chance of being received by them than the most original production without these qualities. Some of the most original thinkers have not at first been highly polished authors, and the same remark applies to music. To run out of the beaten track is always a dangerous thing, and even the great Beethoven was ridiculed by the critics of his day. Mr Wellington Guernsey says that publishers have "many, many failures, even when some of the most popular composers are the authors." If the publisher were guided more by his own individual taste—that is, if he has got any; and if he has not, he is not suited to his calling—he would at least publish what he admires himself. I once heard the remark made by one of

the greatest painters of his day, Clarkson Stanfield, that he never allowed any work to go out into the world that he did not like himself, and he assured, he added, that if you really please yourself you will please those minds who see as you do. What a pity that authors and composers are not guided by the same rule; but unfortunately the pot must be kept boiling, and they have to get the fuel. In conclusion, allow me to say that as far as I am concerned I should be very well pleased to go on recalling the past—even if I do sometimes fall into error—if it would only stir up those who have seen and know so much to open their storehouse and give us of their experience.

PHOSPHOR.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—With regard to "The White Squall," either Mr Wellington Guernsey or Mr Zenas T. Purday must have made a mistake, for, years ago, Zenas said to me in the old shop on Holborn Hill:—"I heard Barker sing that song at Worcester; it had been round the trade and nobody would look at it; I thought, with some little alteration, it could be made to go, and I gave him a guinea for it: it has kept my shop open for years."—Faithfully yours,

W. J. WESTBROOK, *Mus. D. Cantab.*

Sydenham, 13th Oct., 1883.

POEMS FROM MUSIC.

SCHUMANN'S *Winter Time*, No. 1.

(From "The Lute.")

On the drenched woods the winter lies,
A mist of tears; with answering sighs
The woods and the wind sympathise.

The sky above is dull as lead,
The sunshine out of it has fled,
There is no sun—the sun is dead.

Over the low lands look, that lie
Level beneath the level sky,
Are they not mournful utterly?

Dust-gray the rough fields stretch, and frown
With wrinkled ridges at the town,
Gray-white and stolid, looking down.

But enter, leave the cold behind,
And moody moanings of the wind—
Light, heat and joyousness we find.

The fire flames forth: what tho' there lie
Level beneath a level sky
Gray lowlands mournful utterly?

ARTHUR W. SYMONS.

VIENNA.—Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* was performed for the first time at the Imperial Operahouse on the 4th inst. Mme Materna displayed force and lasting power as the heroine, and Herr Winkelmann as Tristan was very good, though the music lies rather low for his voice. Mme Papier, also, as Brangaine, and Herr Scaria as King Marke, acquitted themselves excellently. The orchestra, under the direction of Hans Richter, especially distinguished itself. The Wagnerites are enthusiastic about the performance generally, though highly indignant that anyone should have had the sacrilegious audacity to employ the pruning-knife—and that, too, with no sparing hand—upon the sacred work. The *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* is especially energetic in protesting against the "cuts," which, it appears, have shortened the work by no less than a fifth. "Such vandalism," it says, "is the more deplorable from having been committed with the sanction of an artist generally considered one of those most worthy to protect the Master's intentions and maintain the traditions received from his hands."—Admirers of Mozart had a great and unexpected treat a short time since, when the orchestra under the direction of Herr Hellmesberger performed a Mass in C minor by the immortal composer, which, previously unknown, was lately discovered by the energetic conductor among the dusty archives of the Imperial Operahouse. The work was written in 1771, that is when the composer was fifteen, and gives promise of his future greatness. The first three parts, the "Kyrie," "Gloria," and "Credo," are, contrary to his subsequent practice, carried out at great length, while the other parts are treated much more briefly. The "Crucifixus" is especially impressive. An unusual feature of the instrumentation is the employment of four trumpets and three trombones—a little bit of youthful exuberance.

DEATH.

On October the 15th, at Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square, Commandatore FRANCESCO SCHIRA.—R.I.P.

To ADVERTISERS.—*The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs DUNCAN DAVIDSON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyl Street (First Floor). Advertisements not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.*

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1883.

SCHIRA.

On Monday morning, at his residence, No. 60, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square, after a brief illness, died Francesco Schira, deservedly esteemed for many years among us as a Composer and Professor of Music, and deeply regretted by all who had the advantage of his personal acquaintance.

Requiescat in pace!

For the subjoined memoir of the deceased we are indebted to George Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* :—

Francesco Schira,* long resident and esteemed in London as composer, conductor, and professor of singing, was born at Malta, Sept. 19, 1815, received his early education at Milan,† and was placed at the age of nine (1824) in the Conservatorio, where he learned counterpoint under Basilly, principal of that institution. At seventeen, having completed his studies, Francesco was commissioned to write an opera for the Scala, which was produced Nov. 17, 1832. That *Elena e Malvina*‡ won favourable recognition may be inferred from the fact that a Lisbon impresario being at Milan, with the object of forming a company for the Santo Carlos, contracted an engagement with Schira, for the forthcoming season as "Maestro Direttore, Compositore e Conduttore della Musica." He remained eight years in the Portuguese capital, where he was also appointed Professor of Harmony and Counterpoint at the Conservatory, composing *I Cavalieri di Valenza* and *Il Fanatico per la Musica*, for the Santo Carlos, besides ballets, cantatas, &c. During his stay in Portugal he occasionally conducted operatic performances at the Teatro della Città di Oporto.

In January, 1842, Schira quitted Lisbon for Paris, with the idea of obtaining some book in the French language which he might set to music. In Paris he made the acquaintance of Mr Maddox, then in quest of artists for the Princess's Theatre. || This led to an offer from the London manager, and Schira was appointed director of music and orchestral chief at that establishment. On Monday, December 26, 1842, the Princess's opened as a lyric theatre, and Schira's appearance at the conductor's desk was his first introduction to the English public. The opera chosen was an English version of *La Sonnambula*, the leading characters sustained by Mme Eugénie Garcia, Mme Feron, Mr Templeton, Mr Walton, and Mr Weiss; Mr Loder (father of Edward Loder) being principal violin. This was but the commencement of a series of adaptations from foreign works, diversified by novelties from indigenous pens. Among notable incidents during Schira's term of conductorship may be specified the memorable debut of Anna Thillon in an English version of Auber's *Diamans de la Couronne* (May 1844), that of Mlle Nau in *La Sirène* (Nov. 1844), and the production of two operas by Balfe, originally composed for the Paris Opéra Comique—*Le Puits d'Amour*, rechristened *Geraldine* (Nov. 1843), and *Les Quatre Fils d'Aymon* rechristened *The Castle of Aymon* (Nov. 1844). At the end of 1844 Schira accepted an engagement from Mr Alfred Bunn, then lessee of Drury Lane, to fill the place left vacant by Mr (now Sir Julius) Benedict, who resigned immediately after Balfe's

* The name is sometimes spelt Schira.

† He was the youngest of four children, two of them sisters. The *Bio-graphie Universelle des Musiciens* makes Francesco die of cholera at Lisbon; but Pongin (*Supplément et Complément*) more correctly attributes that fate to Vincenzo, the elder, whom Fétis does not mention, confounding the two together as one.

‡ Pongin gives that opera to Vincenzo; but a printed copy of the libretto (in our possession) states explicitly, "musica del maestro Francesco Schira."

|| Previously known as the Oxford Street Theatre.

Daughter of St Mark was brought out. At Drury Lane he remained until the spring of 1847, when Mr Bunn seceded from the management, the committee having entertained the proposal of M. Julien to become future lessee: and here several adaptations of foreign operas, besides a good number of works by English composers, were produced. From the latter it will suffice to name Wallace's *Maritana* and *Matilda of Hungary*, Macfarren's *Don Quixote*, Benedict's *Crusaders*, Lavenu's *Loretta* (composed for Mme Anna Bishop), Balfe's *Enchantress*, &c.; among the former, Flotow's *Stradella* and *Martha*. In September, 1848, Mr Bunn took Covent Garden Theatre, and Schira was again appointed conductor. The season only lasted two months, but was not without interest. It comprised the first theatrical engagement after his brilliant success, the year before, at Drury Lane, of Mr Sims Reeves, for whom an adaptation of Auber's *Haydée* was produced, the great English tenor assuming the part of Loredano; another English adaptation of Rossini's *Donna del Lago*, and an entirely new opera, called *Quentin Durward*, the composition of Mr Henri Laurent. The success of the enterprise was not in proportion to the expectations of the manager! *Quentin Durward* was by no means a hit; and though Bunn had lowered his prices, the house was prematurely closed. Thus an opera, entitled *Kenilworth*, from Schira's own pen, which had already been put into rehearsal, with Sims Reeves in the part of Leicester, was lost to the public, and no more English opera was heard at Covent Garden until Miss Pyne and Mr Harrison migrated from the Lyceum, to carry on their undertaking in a more spacious arena.

Although he had severed his connection with the Princess's as musical director, in which position his worthy successor was Mr Edward Loder, Schira wrote two original works for the theatre in Oxford Street—*Mina*, produced in 1849, and *Theresa*, or *the Orphan of Geneva*, in 1850, both, the latter especially, received with marked favour. The leading singers in *Mina* were Miss Louisa Pyne, Mme Weiss, Messrs W. Harrison, Weiss and H. Corri; in *Theresa* Miss Louisa Pyne, Messrs Allen, Weiss, H. Corri, and Wynn (brother of Mr G. A. Sala, and a humourist in his way). Mr Bunn, however, having once more become lessee of "Old Drury," naturally looked back for his old and tried adviser. Schira was once more engaged as conductor, with W. Lovell Phillips as chorus-master. The theatre opened on January 23, 1852, with an English version of *Robert le Diable*, succeeded by *Fra Diavolo*, with Mr Sims Reeves (Brigand Chief), and Miss Lucombe. The principal incident that marked the season was the production of *The Sicilian Bride*, by Balfe, in some respects not one of his successful efforts. From this time Schira devoted himself specially to giving instructions in the vocal art. He nevertheless did not neglect composition, as testified in a number of charming songs, duets, trios, &c., some of which have attained wide popularity. He also was busily employed in the composition of a grand opera, called *Niccolò de' Luppi*, performed with marked success at Her Majesty's Theatre in May 1863. For the Carnival of Naples, two years later, he wrote another grand opera, entitled *Selvaggia*, which was given with brilliant success, and represented at Milan, Barcelona, and elsewhere. The reception accorded to *Selvaggia* led to his being asked to write another opera, *Lia*, for Venice. This, also brought out during the Carnival, was hardly so much to the taste of the Venetians as its precursor. Nevertheless there are amateurs who regard *Lia* as Schira's *capo di lavoro*.

The managers of the Birmingham Festival having commissioned Schira to write a cantata for the meeting of 1873 the work was undertaken with ready zeal, and performed under the composer's own direction on the evening of the first day (Aug. 26). The cantata is entitled *The Lord of Burleigh*, the libretto, by Mr Desmond Lumley Ryan, being founded upon the Laureate's well-known poem, though not a line has been appropriated from Tennyson, save the motto which heads the title-page of the printed edition. The piece was received with distinguished favour, two numbers were encored, and the composer called back with unanimity to the platform. Since then Schira has been almost silent as a producer for the stage, the only exception being an operetta, entitled *The Ear-ring*, performed at the St George's Hall Theatre. Anything like a catalogue of his miscellaneous pieces would occupy too much space. Enough that Francesco Schira is a composer of the genuine Italian type; Italian by birth he is also Italian by predilection—a true child of the sunny land to which we owe Piccini, Cimarosa, Paisiello, Rossini, Bellini, and Verdi. His music, while revealing the hand of one who has thoroughly mastered the principles of his art, is free from all pretence, relying upon its unaffected simplicity and grace for the impression it seldom fails to create. His most important works having been referred to, a recapitulation would be superfluous. As an instructor in music, Schira has always maintained a high position, many a public vocalist of note having profited by his counsels. In his own country and elsewhere abroad, he holds

the insignia of several orders of merit, the most prized of which is that of "Commendatore della Corona d'Italia"—prized the more because conferred by King Humbert, *motu proprio*.—J. W. D.

The funeral of Signor Schira took place on Thursday morning, at the Roman Catholic Cemetery, Fulham, attended by several of his intimate friends, among whom were Mr George Jefferys, Mr W. Ganz, Signor Meiners, Mr D. L. Ryan, Mr Duncan Davison, and the esteemed representative of the house of Ricordi, of Milan, who at the conclusion of the ceremony delivered an eloquent and feeling oration at the grave, doing justice to the memory of the departed composer, both as a man and an artist. We shall have early occasion to return to the subject.

CRYSTAL PALACE CONCERTS.

The first of the twenty-eighth series of Winter concerts, held on Saturday afternoon, October 13, was, according to the custom of late, almost unannounced by the directors of the Palace. To the Londoner, however, it is by no means an unimportant event in the musical year. And, upon consideration, where is the need of placarding the town, to apprise the inhabitants of the day and hour of the opening, when the particular season upon which it falls seems to do all that is necessary in the advertising way? For as sure as Winter approaches, so sure does the lover of music seek and find in his favourite corner of the Palace a compensation for loss of outdoor amusements. And every one knows old Winter is anything but an idle showman. He certainly understands right well the art of advertising, and when about to bring his panorama this way, he never neglects to send on a whole string of agents in advance, with orders apparently to come to London before arousing the country. How busy these outriders are! One hurries to scatter late summer leaves upon the pavement of our squares; another comes daily to cut off a bit of morning and evening; that one turns both the day and night skies into lead, and, should any doubter of the approaching exhibition remain, this one chokes his sceptical throat with a fog that knows no disputation. Now do not all these agents advertise, by implication at least, the orchestral concerts? Surely yes, for the latter and Winter are inseparable. At all events, the visitors to the concert-room stalked in on Saturday with the freedom and placidity of persons returning to seats after a few minutes' interval. But their quiet way instantly changed to excitement when Mr August Manns came to resume his old position at the conducting desk. Amongst the hearty peals of welcome which greeted him, it was not difficult, at least in fancy, to discern the "one cheer more" given in acknowledgment of successful work done at the recent Handel Festival.

The concert opened with a capital performance of Weber's festival overture, *Jubilee*, a work chosen more for its intrinsic merits than for the accident of its containing a version of our National Anthem. True, it did dispense with the formal expression of loyalty, generally used at the beginning or ending of musical celebrations, but that is no reason why the audience should have forgotten to rise in loyalty to their feet when the majestic strains were heard. The chief novelty in the programme was a "concerto for pianoforte and orchestra in G minor (op. 33)" by Dvorák. Everything from the pen of this recently discovered composer attracts the attention of the profession and musical public, and not a few of the former class undertook the journey to Sydenham on Saturday solely to hear this last importation, though really not last manifestation, of Dvorák's genius. So far as the outside form is concerned, it is, like previous concertos, divided into three parts, "Allegro agitato," "Andante sostenuto," and "Finale." But in detail the resemblance is oftentimes lost. This is especially felt in the first movement, although it opens with the usual orchestral *tutti*, and soon it becomes evident that the composer's intention is not to grant the solo instrument that separate existence formerly accorded. Not that the pianoforte is ever kept in abeyance, indeed it is rather flogged into prolonged activity, very rarely assuming that definite attitude and compact front which give one an idea of its being able to stand alone. It is more an attendant than a leader, more like the faithful retriever that follows than the master who guides. But should the solo instrument lead? Should anyone part have an independent existence? These questions modern composers are bent upon solving. It is certain, however, Dvorák has not satisfactorily settled the matter

in this movement, for neither is the ear gratified, nor the mind satisfied by the restless strivings, and insecure grappings of the subjects one with the other. After some time the listener longs for the forces to meet, longs for the querulous, purposeless, wrangling to be lost in some conquering theme. Now, however, the "Andante sostenuto" begins, and surely the serenity of flowing subjects will make amends! No, not entirely. True, both the first and second subjects are replete with grace, and the pianoforte now takes a more personal part in expressing them, but in the end the notion steals upon us that the eloquent subjects are used more for the exhibition of musicianly treatment than for speaking to the heart. At length, the final "Allegro con fuoco" awakens interest in the tired listener. Here are found themes so full of spontaneous life as to be able to resist to some extent, the crushing influence of the technical mill. Yes, here the true Dvorák shows an original nature—a bright, joyous and sensitive nature. Themes fresh as mountain breezes invigorate the jaded mind.

A further hearing may lead one to qualify the above remarks, as a greater familiarity will assuredly enable the executants to throw a clearer light upon the work. Mr Oscar Beringer was the pianist, and once more proved himself not only a sound musician, but also a highly-skilled performer. His wide mental grasp of the complex musical argument found a ready expositor in unerring manipulation. The instructive analysis of this work in the "book of words," by the accomplished "C. A. B.," would have been more acceptable had the writer avoided reference to "critics who set form above every other consideration." Hitherto, the pages of the "book" have been used not for debate, but for the imparting of information, and any departure from that course is to be regretted.

If the Winter concerts had done no other service to the state than the familiarizing of Beethoven's symphonies, they would be deserving of the honour accorded them. Let it be clearly understood that the directors did not, when adopting such a high-class programme, set themselves up as educators of musical society. On the contrary, the business they had in hand was to afford entertainment that should be profitable to the company, as well as advantageous to the public. They did not appeal so much to the musical profession as to the general ticket-holders, and upon the latter, happily, enlightenment has principally fallen. At no assembly in the world could a symphony by the greatest of masters be more keenly appreciated or more heartily enjoyed than was the B flat, the fourth of the glorious nine, by the audience on Saturday last. Possibly there were but a limited few who could give an intelligent account of the materials and proportions of the musical structure, but most, if not all, present were more or less conscious of the mighty forces which had been brought into play. This sympathy of man with action, commotion, and agitation is the secret of Beethoven's magic power over all listeners. In his symphonies particularly they acknowledge a relationship to the emotions of their hearts. His themes, like their own feelings, are never for a moment the same in volume and intensity. The calm musical statement will agitate itself into phrenzy, and the violent utterance suddenly become a mere breath. So is the current of the soul's emotions subject to extremes, and is never, from the cradle to the grave, found in a perfect state of rest. It is needless to say that the orchestra, under the direction of Mr Manns, played the symphony with all their old accuracy and power; still some slight reservation should be made, inasmuch as the opening of the *cantabile* passage of the *adagio* was scarcely rendered with that softness of tone with which it is distinguished.

The concluding overture, *King Lear*, (Berlioz), was given for the first time at these concerts. It is a matter of doubt whether this work will further increase the interest already taken in the French composer, who, in his lifetime, suffered comparative neglect. It certainly has striking merits. For it reveals a vivid fancy, daring courage, and burning enthusiasm; also a creative power in orchestral effects, with abundant variety of thematic materials; it may indeed have every necessary quality besides, excepting, perhaps, that indescribable essence—genius. The orchestral figures, as figures in a picture of a mosaic character put together without the binding cement, seem to be without essential unity. Moreover, the several subjects have not a just relative value, and appear consequently out of proportion. For instance, the oboe theme, following quickly upon the strident unison passage for the bass instruments, wants some subtle con-

necting link to thoroughly establish relationship with its fellows. Indeed, the varied musical objects presented by Berlioz in *King Lear* appear very much as a scene of nature would without the presence of the quickening atmosphere which binds all earthly things together in one common life. The vocalist was Mrs Hutchinson, who sang Handel's "Hide me from day's garish eye," and a "bolero" by Berlioz. PENCERDD GWFFYN.

MUSIC AT MARGATE.

(From a Correspondent.)

During the season but lately come to an end, with admonitory equinoctial gales, music has been playing a conspicuous part, both at the pretty little "theatre and operahouse," so well managed by Miss Sarah Thorne, and elsewhere. I see that your correspondent of the unpronounceable name ("Sillew Sueddaht") has taken due notice in your columns of the recent performances of *Iolanthe*, by one of the best of Mr D'Oyly Carte's excellent companies, and, therefore, pass them over, with many other attractive incidents. I wish to draw attention to a representation-extraordinary of a work not half so generally known as it deserves to be. Some quarter of a century ago, a cantata, entitled *Mazeppa*, founded upon Lord Byron's poem so-called, libretto by Jessica Rankin, music by the late M. W. Balfe, was produced in Exeter Hall, and met with a highly favourable reception. The leading solo singers were Mmes Lemmens-Sherrington and Sainton Dolby, Messrs Sims Reeves and Santley—a tolerably fair cast, as all will allow. Since that time the cantata has very rarely been heard. The pretext which led to its revival here was an excellent one—namely, an amateur performance under the management of Lord Arthur Hill, a distinguished amateur, and his lady—no less distinguished—for the benefit of the Crèche, or Day-Nursery. The experiment was entirely successful, attracting a large and fashionable audience, and exhibiting beauties of melody, construction, and expression in Balfe's happiest vein. There are four characters in the work which were carefully sustained by Mrs Francis Talfourd, an accomplished vocalist, of whom your readers must often have heard (Theresa), Lady Arthur Hill (Nita), Mr Spooner Hardy ("The Count"), and Mr Trelawney Cobham, whom to name will suffice. Each of these is well furnished by the astute and ready composer, always skilful in suiting the music to the words, and thus imparting distinct individuality to his personages, and well-defined point to his concerted pieces. The performance was in all respects careful and effective, Mr Trelawney Cobham obtaining two encores, Mrs Talfourd's refined singing winning unstinted applause, and the rest to match. The operetta of *Cox and Box* (Sullivan and Burnand) followed, the three leading parts falling to Messrs Cotford Dick, C. P. Colnaghi, and G. Farquhar. This extravaganza, in its way inimitable, created the accustomed hilarity. The audience were pleased throughout, and I am glad to add that the results surpassed expectation.—ALEXIS SPRAY.

Postscriptum.—Not the least musical attraction at Margate is the permanent residence here of John L. Hatton, composer of "To Anthea," and many other songs that will live for ever. The veteran may be seen almost daily on the jetty, hale and hearty, at the age of seventy-three, and a countenance beaming with promise of good things yet to come.—A. S.

BALFE.—Mr Gwyllym Crowe announces a "Balfe night" at the Promenade Concerts this Saturday, the day of the anniversary of the death of the composer and of the unveiling of the monumental tablet in Westminster Abbey.—*Morning Post*.

AFTER all the nonsense which has been talked about Wagner during his life and since his death, Sir George Macfarren's Academy address comes as a very wholesome corrective. It is the more likely to do good because it so honestly recognized Wagner's genius. Sir George's main object was to put the younger portion of his audience on their guard against the fascination which in much of Wagner's work is well-nigh irresistible. He estimates the prophet of Bayreuth as a sort of musical Byron, who, whatever the power and beauty of his own work, is bound to have a debasing influence on his imitators. I agree with Professor Macfarren that there is not much chance for the native musician under modern German inspiration. And from an Anglo-Wagnerian school of music may the critics and all other powers deliver us!—*Life*.

PROVINCIAL.

NEWBURY.—A vocal and instrumental concert, in connection with the Newbury Literary and Scientific Institution, was given at the Town Hall on Tuesday evening, October 9th; the vocalists being Mdmé Clara West, Miss C. Wollaston, Mr H. Parkin, and Mr H. Prenton. Solo violinist, Chevalier Niedzielski; conductor, Mr Lovett King. There was a very large audience.

BRISTOL.—On Friday evening, Oct. 5th, Mdmé Florence Grant, a lady who has organized a series of concerts for charitable purposes, gave one in Colston Hall in aid of the Bristol Children's Hospital. Mdmé Grant—says the *Bristol Mercury*—has a mezzo-soprano voice that has evidently been carefully cultivated, proof of which was evidenced by her rendering of "Angels ever bright and fair." Mdmé Grant was assisted by Mr Edward Hall (tenor) and Mr Edwyn Frith (bass); Miss Lilian Curtice, a young vocalist, twelve years of age, who sang "Rose softly blooming" with taste and expression; Mdmé Edwyn Frith, Mdmé Helene de Lisle (violinist), and Mdlle Marie Brunelle (pianist). Owing to the short time in which the concert was arranged, the attendance was not so large as its merits and the object for which it was given deserved.

CHELMSFORD.—On Wednesday evening, October 10th, an evening concert was given, with success, at the Chelmsford Literary Institute, before a numerous and appreciative audience. The artists were Mdmé Clara West, Mr Sydney Barnby, Mr H. Parkin, Mr Lovett King, and Mr H. Prenton.

GERMAN REED'S ENTERTAINMENT.—Mr Corney Grain's new Musical Sketch, *On the Thames*, and a new "Second Part" entitled *A Water Cure*, libretto by Arnold Felix, music by George Gear, will be given at St. George's Hall on Monday evening for the first time.

THE ORGANIST OF YORK MINSTER.—On Wednesday, Mr John Naylor, Mus. Doc., Oxon., organist of All Saints', Scarborough, was appointed organist of York Minster, *vice* Dr Monk (resigned). The position is worth £700 per annum; but out of this Dr Monk has a life-pension of £300. Dr Naylor received his musical training at the Leeds parish church, of which he was deputy organist. He was then appointed organist of Scarborough parish church, and in 1873 he became organist of All Saints', Scarborough.

ORGAN RECITALS.—Mr F. Lewis Thomas, a son of the highly-esteemed vocalist, Mr Lewis Thomas, is giving a series of short organ recitals at St Mary's, Plaistow, where he is organist and choir-master. On Sunday, October 7, he played—Chorus, "Endless praise to Thee be given" (Haydn), Adagio Cantabile (Haydn), Allegretto quasi Andante (Warwick Jordan), and Rondo—con imitazione de campanelli—(Giovanni Morandi). On October 14 he gave—Fugue in G minor (Bach), Pastorale (Salomé), Domine Deus—*Messe Solennelle*—(Rossini), and March Celebré (Lachner-Lux). The programme for to-morrow (October 21) is as follows:—Fugue in E flat (Bach), Adagio in E (Merkel), Larghetto (Spohr), and March in E flat (Salomé); and for October 28—Prelude and Fugue in D minor (Bach), Adagio in A flat (Spohr), Pastorale in G (Merkel), and Grand Chœur en Re Majeur—à la Handel—(Guilmant).

LEEDS AND BRADFORD CO-TELEPHONED.—I hear it stated that the Leeds Festival Committee propose connecting the Town Hall with Bradford by telephone—an ingenious plan, worthy of the hard-headed Yorkshiremen. The telephone will be of an improved kind, and will, it is fondly hoped, carry sweet music in the most approved manner to the music-loving ears of Bradford connoisseurs. Evidently, this will give a Musical Festival to two large towns at little more than the cost of one. Double the number of seats will be sold, and if this improved method of telephonic music only answers as its promoters expect, the whole system of concerts and festivals vanish into thin air. What a relief! No more crushes; no more hot rooms, where the listener hears only one note in ten. According to the Leeds electricians, we shall be able to sit at home and have any sort of music we choose laid on. I foresee the time when music manufactories or co-operative supply associations will take the whole system of concert-catering into their own hands, and execute orders for sonatas, quartet, or overtures just as easily as they now supply boots, shoes, or groceries. Their travellers will call for weekly orders, and we shall put down fugues and ballads with cheese and candles in our housekeeper's book. No more long-haired musicians. German bands are doomed, and, rapture! we shall at last escape that horrible infliction, the Musical Party. This alone will save suffering thousands from that last stage of fashionable idleness—Musical amateurism!—*Life*.

MUSICAL SKETCHES.

By H. E. D.

No. 4.—THE HAUNTED ORGAN.

"Some bless'd spirit doth speak
His powerful sound within an organ weak."

All's Well that Ends Well (Act II. sc. 1).

"Excellent voice in this little organ."

Hamlet (Act III. sc. 2).

"Excuse my having interrupted you, Gregford! What were you going to tell me? Something about a haunted organ, I think."

"Ah, yes! But did I never relate to you, Bingley, the ludicrous experience I had at Hogsley St Anthony?"

"I think not. Was that where you were organist of the parish church?"

"Yes; and an interesting old church it was; especially to antiquaries, who often travelled from considerable distances to see the fine old Norman doorway, and inspect the monumental brasses, which were said to be some of the finest specimens in England. The sacred edifice had not been 'restored' in those days, you know, and the organ, which was a large, cumbersome old instrument, with F pedals, stood in a dark loft at the west end."

"I don't think you could have found a more dreary old church than it was at that time. It stood all alone in a desolate district. The lofty aisles were hung with cobwebs, which also shut out the light from the higher windows, giving a gloom and mysticism to the old place. The pews were nearly as high as the divisions in a coffee-house, and in their midst stood the old black 'three-decker,' casting its sombre shadow around."

"I remember well the feeling I had the first time I entered the church. I had obtained the key of the chancel door in order that I might inspect the organ, and as I walked down the nave in the twilight my footsteps echoed through the tall arches, which one could almost imagine to say, 'What dost thou here, disturbing our six-days' slumber?'"

"The staircase was rotten and unsafe, and in the organ-loft one had to watch one's footsteps with a tender care, for there were several large holes where the flooring had disappeared, and many inequalities where it had been patched."

"The organ itself was a poor worn-out old instrument, which had, doubtless, been a good one in its day. The parishioners were too poor, or too indifferent, to have it properly repaired or replaced by a new one, and so the late organist, an old man, who had held the appointment (a more or less honorary post) for nearly two-score years, and to whom the organ had been almost like a child, had spent all his spare moments in patching and cobbling it. The mechanism was quite an interesting study, so ingeniously was it kept together by bits of wire, iron cramps from a neighbouring anvil, splicings and joints bound up with string, strips of glued pasteboard and lumps of sealing-wax. In one place you would find an old flat-iron acting as additional weight to the shutters of the swell-box, and, in another, a piece of leather from an old shoe serving as a hinge,—but I am digressing, Bingley."

"To come to my little story. There was a young fellow living in the place named Denvers, a weak-minded, irresolute and phlegmatic youth, who had so much conceit withal, and took such great liberties in regard to myself, that he became quite objectionable to me."

"This Denvers had some musical pretensions of a very amateur kind, and had obtained permission from the old Rector to practise on the church organ. I objected very much to this, as the organ required very careful management, and was very liable to get out of order. On one occasion, after he had been playing on (or rather *with*) the instrument, I was obliged to devote several hours to repairing and readjusting some of the internal arrangements which he had thrown out of order."

"I protested strongly to the Rector, and he promised that the permission should be withdrawn as soon as he saw an opportunity of doing so without hurting Mr Denvers' feelings."

"How long I should have had to await this opportunity, I do not know, if an accident, and I think you will say a somewhat ludicrous one, had not brought about the desired result."

"It happened in this manner. Late one afternoon I was at the church alone looking for some music. Having found what I sought, I happened to remember that there was some small matter in the interior of the organ requiring attention, and, as I considered there was no time like the present, I unlocked the door at the back of the instrument, and got inside."

"I had not been there two minutes, when I heard somebody turning a key in the chancel door. Two persons entered and walked down the aisle towards the organ-loft, and between the pipes I saw, to my no little chagrin, that they were Denvers and the boy who acted as his blower."

"As I wanted to finish what I was doing (which was quite a silent occupation) and did not care to have a meeting with Denvers, I decided to remain where I was until he had finished his practice and left; so gently closed the organ door, and secured it on the inside."

"'Wilkins!' said Denvers to the boy, as they groped their way upstairs, 'just try to blow a little more steadily this time. Do you hear?'"

"'Yes, sir,' meekly replied the juvenile as he found his way to the bellows and began pumping them full in preparation."

"Denvers led off with some soft voluntaries in which he sought assiduously to discover some new and original combinations, and which resulted for the most part in the uniting of 4-ft and 2-ft stops with the 'mixtures,' omitting the 8-ft and 16-ft as quite superfluous. The pleasant effect will be obvious, even to you, Bingley, with your very elementary knowledge of the organ."

"However, I endured it as best I could until it grew too dark for me to see what I was doing, when I became impatient to go; but, as I could not then disclose myself with very good grace I had no alternative but to wait."

"I therefore sought a more comfortable position, and found a tolerable seat on a beam which supported a part of the mechanism. By an accident, however, in moving, one of my coat tails got entangled in a portion of the action, and set three or four notes 'cyphering.'"

"'Hang it!' cried Denvers, 'Now I wonder what could have caused that!' and he began to shake the keys of the offending notes vigorously."

"This little misadventure, if I may so call it, gave me an idea. In a few minutes, when he was in the middle of a soft passage on the swell, I suddenly pulled one of the 'trackers' on the great organ, and held it down."

"'That's most extraordinary!' Denvers ejaculated as he tugged at the key and tried to get it back to its proper position; 'I didn't even touch that note. It must be a change in the temperature—and yet it can't be that. Something must have rolled between the keys,' he muttered, and began probing with his penknife. 'There! confound it, it has got under the other key now!' he exclaimed, as I let the note return to its place and pulled down another."

"However, I soon let him resume his playing, and, as it was getting dark, he began extemporizing. If his rendering of the works of the great composers was painful to me, his extempore performance was a thousand times more so."

"I next waited until he was indulging in the full organ, when I stepped across and threw my whole weight on the lever of the bellows. The urchin tugged with all his might at the handle but it would not move. In a few seconds the bellows became exhausted with a melancholy grunt and Denvers shouted out, 'Now then, Wilkins, what are you doing? Why don't you keep the wind in?'"

"'Please, sir, I can't,' said Wilkins. 'It won't move. Come and see, sir!'"

"'What won't move?' said Denvers in a rage. 'The fact is you're a—Pshaw! that's curious! The thing's out of order somewhere. We shall have to get inside the organ by some means and try to set it right. That fellow Gregford will be sure to blame me!'"

"This threat, which, if put in practice, would have involved my discovery and humiliation, made me relent."

"'There!' said Denvers, 'It's all right now. Just see if you can't blow more carefully.'"

"I waited until he had begun to play and then, in a voice as like his own as I could give, I called 'Wilkins!' The boy left his post and ran round to the player, again letting the wind escape."

"'Confound you! What are you doing here? Why don't you stick to your bellows, you young donkey!'"

"'Please, sir, you called me,' said the boy."

"'I did nothing of the kind, sir!'"

"'Well, then somebody did.'"

"'You are telling a falsehood, Wilkins!' said Denvers. 'It's simply you are getting too lazy to blow. Go back at once! You shall stay another half-hour for that.'"

"'Not if I can help it!' I inwardly remarked as the poor boy returned to his pumping operations."

"I wanted to get home and my patience was now exhausted. I therefore determined to see if I could not frighten them away."

"A few minutes more and I gave a deep groan."

"'Wilkins! what are you making that noise for?' shouted Denvers."

"'Please, sir, it wasn't me. I thought it was you, sir.'"

"'Come here! What do you mean by saying you thought it was me? The fact of the whole matter is this,—"

"'There, there it is again, sir! Listen!'"

"'I wo-wo-wo-wonder what it is?' stammered Denvers in unmistakable alarm.

"'Praps its a ghost in the organ, sir, or—'

"'Pooh! you're frightened, Wilkins, so you had better go home. Besides, I've finished playing. Come along! What a time you are!'

"Both scrambled down the stairs as fast as they could. I waited until they were at the bottom, (not wishing to be the cause of their breaking their necks) and as they scampered across the church I cried out in the deepest tones I could command, 'Beware!' and at the same time set a number of the notes sounding, there being still a little wind left in the organ. They shrieked and fled as if for their lives.

"I laughed heartily and went home.

"In a short time it was all over the neighbourhood that spirit voices had been heard inside the old organ, and that invisible hands had played it.

"As Denvers entirely gave up his organ practice in consequence, I, of course, did not try to suppress the superstition, and must admit, that when questioned on the subject, I said I was bound to confess that I had once heard something very like a human voice inside the instrument—which was perfectly true, the said voice having been my own.

"The popular belief was, that it was the unrestful spirit of poor old Vampus, the late organist, that haunted the organ, and many persons expected that a hoard of money would be found somewhere inside the old instrument. But, when it was pulled down, they were, of course, disappointed."

"It must have been an awfully good joke, Gregford, by Jove! I say, you must tell that to young Winston."

"I have already done so. By the way, do you know what he has named the story?"

"No! What is it?"

"'Gregford's Ghost; or, the Vox Humana Stop.'"

Johannes Brahms' *Deutsches Requiem* was lately performed in Schwerin.

EISENACH.—Professor Donndorf, of Stuttgart, has completed the model of the colossal statue which is to be erected here to Johann Sebastian Bach, and, as at present intended, to be unveiled on the bi-centenary, next year, of his birth. The model has been conveyed for casting to Howaldt's foundry, Brunswick. Bach is represented in the act of composing. His left hand rests lightly upon a high desk at his side, while his right grasps a pen. The old Master's tall and stately figure is clad in a long tight-fitting coat, in the fashion of the first half of the last century, a long waistcoat, knee-breeches, and shoes with buckles, while on the energetic head is the well-known historical peruke. All the details are most delicately carried out.

BERLIN.—The new buffo opera, *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, has not inaugurated very auspiciously the new Friedrich-Wilhelmstädtisches Theater, the elegant edifice into which Herr Fritzsche has transformed the old dingy Waltersdorff-Theater. Though by two practised hands, Herren Zell and Genée, the libretto, founded on a French piece, is not only uninteresting, but, in several instances, too free for public taste here. The score is the work of a skilful and experienced musician, but exhibits great want of originality. Several of the numbers had, however, to be repeated, and the composer (who himself conducted), the manager, and the singers, were called on after the first and second acts, as well as at the fall of the curtain. But despite this and the splendid *mise-en-scène*, *Eine Nacht in Venedig* does not seem destined to have a very long run.—The Royal Cathedral Choir gave their first Sacred Concert this season on the 1st inst. In the way of old compositions the programme contained "Dixit Joseph," Orlando Lassus; "O, Vos Omnes," Ludovico Vittoria; and "Ascendo ad Patrem," Jacobus Gallus, all dating from the sixteenth century. Johann S. Bach contributed the motet: "Es ist nun nichts Verdammliches." Modern composers were represented by the chorus: "Die Strafe liegt auf ihm," Otto Nicolai; a setting of "Verses 25 and 26 from the 73rd Psalm," Rheinhold Succo; and the "Benedictus" from the *Requiem* in A flat by F. Kiel.—The Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of Herr von Brenner, opened their winter season on the 2nd inst. The most important work on the first night was Beethoven's *Eroica*. The other items were "Ciaccona" from Franz Lachner's *Third Suite*; "Rhapsodie," No. 3, Anton Dvorak; Overture to Shakspeare's *Richard III.*, by Robert Volkmann; and "Deutscher Triumph-march," by Carl Reinecke.—*Wiener Tanzsängerinnen*, "Viennese Lady-Dance-Singers," such is the name assumed by a number of fair vocalists from the Austrian capital, who are about starting on a concert-tour, under the direction of Herr Gothov-Grüncke, and will first appear at the Centralhotel here on the 20th inst. Their repertory will consist exclusively of Waltzes and Marches, the former predominating.

CHERUBINI.

(Continued from page 642.)

There was an examination for admission into the singing classes. Several candidates had been heard, when, at last, a poor devil, absolutely grotesque in his appearance, presented himself. Short, ugly, ill-formed, with crooked legs, a phenomenal nose, and a mouth rivalling the jaws of a crocodile, he came forward and sang an operatic air with a delicious voice and perfect taste. The examiners, however, after having advised with their superior, could not make up their minds to admit into the school an individual so ill-favoured by nature, and so inexorably precluded from appearing on the stage, but, on the other hand, they wished him to know they were entranced with his talent. Cherubini declared he would take upon himself the task of acquainting the unfortunate candidate with the general feeling, and, having sent for him, thus addressed him:—"My young friend, your voice is magnificent! Yes, your voice is superb, and you sing with a great deal of taste. The Committee are, in consequence, delighted to have heard you. At the same time, however, they regret exceedingly they cannot admit you." "But what is their reason, sir?" timidly asked the poor youth. "What is their reason? Why, my young friend, because we cannot on your account open a theatre for monkeys!"—Here is another anecdote told by Miel in one of the two articles published by him on Cherubini:—

"A little boy, endowed with the most happy natural gifts, wished to be received as a pupil of the Conservatory; the son of a musician, and already initiated in the practice of the art, he had enlisted all the professors in his favour; he excited interest, also, by a charming face and pleasing appearance. On the day fixed for making his request, he proceeded to the institution with his father, who from his disproportionate height, was remarkable in another fashion. Advised by their friends, the applicants posted themselves in a room which the Director never failed to traverse when starting on his visit to the class rooms. On opening the door, Cherubini found himself confronted by a colossus, who, from the eminence of his six feet, was awkwardly holding by the hand a perfect little cherub. Surprised at the meeting and no doubt taken aback by this contrast between the extremes of human stature, he said in a haughty tone to the giant: 'What can I do for you?' then, on being informed of his visitor's wish, he continued, as he proceeded on his way: "I do not take in infants to wet-nurse." The poor father was thunderstruck. He rejoined his friends and informed them of his discomfiture. Thinking they knew the reason, they consoled the father, and took their boy *protégé* into another room, the invariable termination of the visit to the class rooms. They installed him there at a piano, and for his guidance told him to play whatever entered his head, impressing upon him that he was not to leave off whoever came in. There was now no father present. Cherubini made his appearance. The choice of the pieces and the way in which they were executed struck him; he stopped, sat down, and listened. The age, the grace, and the talent of the executant had produced their effect. Caresses and words of encouragement were followed by questions; on the principles of the art the child was not to be shaken. 'Bravo, my little friend,' said Cherubini, delighted. 'But why are you here, and what can I do for you?'—'Something very easy for you,' replied the applicant, 'and something which will make me very happy: admit me into the Conservatory.' 'The thing is done, replied the Director; 'you are one of us.' Thereupon he left the room, and gaily related what had happened, adding laughingly: 'I took very good care not to push my interrogatory further, for the brat would have proved to me that he knew more than I did.'"

But, as we know, Cherubini did not always laugh. He required from all obedience and submission, and expected that the habits of order and exactitude which he had introduced into the School, and to which he himself was the first to submit, should be respected even by his official superiors. Thus, one day, when M. de Lauriston, Minister of the King's Household, had kept them waiting previous to the distribution of prizes, Cherubini, on seeing him enter, went up to him, and said, as he would have said to one of his professors: "You are very late, Monseigneur!" Habeneck, we are told, was the only person whom, despite his efforts, he could not get to observe the punctuality he had imposed on every one else; Habeneck was always late at the meetings of the Committee of Studies, and Cherubini, who was at his post before any other person, did not fail to reproach Habeneck with the offence. One day, however, contrary to his inveterate habit, Habeneck was extraordinarily business-like. He came in

out of breath, bathed in perspiration, and mopping his forehead. Proud of himself, he said to Cherubini: "This time you cannot complain. I hope I am punctual." Taking out his watch, Cherubini replied, with the utmost composure: "No; you are not punctual. You are three minutes too soon." Cherubini's directorship was, in truth, a blessing for the Conservatory; for he not only restored it all its external splendour, but reorganized it throughout, on a solid foundation, making it, really, the first musical school in Europe—a school that was unparalleled and unrivalled. He re-established all the courses of lectures in logical order; regulated the different studies by imparting to them the necessary unity of views and method; imposed upon all a severe discipline, without which there is no profitable work; and, lastly, succeeded in surrounding himself with eminent professors, who seconded him worthily in his task, and contributed their share to the renaissance of the institution. Among those who were called to the Conservatory by him, and whom he succeeded in securing, we must especially mention, for theory, Bienaimé, Edouard Batiste, Kuhn, F. Bazin, Croharé, Schneitzhoeffter, Henri Potier, Bsozzi, Savard, Le Couppey, and Mme Wartel-Andrien; for singing, Adolphe Nourrit, Mme Damoreau, Pellegrini, Banderall, Derivis, Paneron, and Levasseur; for the instrumental department, Tulou, Naderman, Auguste Kreutzer, Norblin, Berr, Klose, Prumier, Dauverné, and Meifred; and, for elocution, Samson, Beauvallet, &c. The reader may easily believe that with a professorial staff composed of such artists, the standard of study, which for several years had exhibited considerable depression, must have risen rapidly, and soon have been equal to every want. Cherubini's well-known severity, moreover, was inflexibly exercised on all pupils who did not seem to exert themselves enough, and he pitilessly struck out of the classes all whose progress was not manifested with sufficient rapidity. In this respect, he insisted on the strict observance of the regulations; every one knew this, and everyone did his best; professors and pupils, always kept on the alert by unceasing supervision; always stimulated by the desire and the thought of contenting a difficult master, but one whom they knew was just in his severity, placed all their efforts at the service of the common cause, the prosperity of which increased from day to day. It was thus that in a few years the Conservatory became once more a nursery for great artists; excited the astonishment and admiration of foreigners; and contributed its share to the intellectual glory of France. Cherubini, however, was not on this account less modest. Always desirous of doing better than he had done, he was never satisfied with the results obtained. More than any other person he rendered justice to the worthy founder of the Conservatory, the venerable Sarrette, whom he had seen at work, and to whom he one day paid a brilliant tribute of homage. It was in 1839, and twenty-five years had elapsed since Sarrette had quitted the directorship of the institution he founded. On this occasion, the professors and former pupils combined to get up a banquet as a testimony of their esteem and gratitude. Cherubini, as may be supposed, attended the gathering, and, rising at the end of the repast, exclaimed, when proposing Sarrette's health: "*May the Conservatory, for its glory and prosperity, one day find a director like you!*"

Among the facts which mark Cherubini's directorship we cannot pass over in silence the foundation of the Société des Concerts, which he aided to the utmost. As we know, the first idea of this institution belonged to Habeneck, but it is just to state that Cherubini exerted in its favour all his power and all his influence, and that to him was due a great part of its success. It was he who submitted to the Vicomte de la Rochefoucauld, then charged with the department of Fine Arts, the organic plan of the new Society, and who caused that plan to be adopted and a slight grant to be made the Society. It was he, moreover, who had the concert-room fitted up, the platform for the chorus and orchestra made, and all the material requisites supplied. Lastly, it was he who, in his capacity of president, directed all the proceedings of the committee, and enabled the Society to present itself worthily before the public. Cherubini's name, like Habeneck's, is, therefore, closely connected with the foundation of the institution, which since then has not ceased to occupy the first place among all the institutions of the same kind existing in Europe.

It was, also, in 1835, during his stay at the Conservatory, that Cherubini published, for the use of the students, his superb *Cours*

de contrepoint et de fugue. We may believe that he, better than any one else, was capable of formulating the precepts of a science with which he was so familiar, and of codifying, in some sort, the strict rules of counterpoint and fugue, without a knowledge of which no person can be a true musician. Yet, if we are to believe Fétis, this now famous treatise is scarcely aught more than a second-hand affair, a simple collection of lessons and examples, which their author was unable to connect with each other, and to link which together in something like logical order he was compelled to call in the assistance of someone else. That it may not be thought I am exaggerating, I will here reproduce literally what Fétis says on the subject:

"A perfect master when he had to show by an example the application of a precept, he was hardly ever able to find an explanation of the latter. Woe to the student who did not understand him at the slightest word, for it was rarely that he could explain fully all he meant. This verbal difficulty with regard to the practice of things with which he was so familiar was painful to him; it aroused his ill-humour against the student who caused him the perplexity. Auber, Halévy, and other artists who studied under his directorship would recognize this portrait of him. It would be an error to suppose that the *Cours de contrepoint et de fugue*, published in his name, contradicts our assertions, for Cherubini never thought of writing a dogmatic treatise on these matters. He had prepared for his pupils models of every instance of simple and double counterpoint, imitations, canons, and fugues; one or two pages of principles, pretty similar to what we find in Mattei's work, preceded the examples; all Cherubini's pupils copied these pages and, like myself, know all about them. The idea of speculating with the models struck someone or other; but a text was needed, and Cherubini would not write one. It was Halévy, I think, who had the complaisance to undertake the task for his master. Such is the truth concerning the *Cours de contrepoint et de fugue* published in the great artist's name."

(To be continued.)

OBJECTIONABLE SONGS.

(To the Editor of the "Times.")

SIR,—I do not know the Royal Music Hall, which, your columns tell me, has just narrowly escaped extinction owing to the production of an objectionable song. I do not even know in what part of London the Royal Music Hall is situated; but out of the experience of the philanthropic ladies and gentlemen now managing the Victoria Coffee Tavern and Music Hall, over Waterloo Bridge (lately known as the Victoria Theatre, and popularly "the Vic."), a fact may be given which goes to the point in question closely.

The strictest watch (by the very facts of the case) is kept over what is presented on the boards of "the Vic." No "professionals" are engaged whose performances are not first seen, from beginning to end, either by "private view" on the managers' own stage, or by visit to some other hall where the performers are to be seen. In addition, notices are posted up, here and there, that any "artist" introducing objectionable matter, of any sort, will be summarily dismissed; and the managers' box is always occupied by the excellent executive to whom the working of the place of entertainment is entrusted, and by whom the working is so untiringly carried out. Yet, in spite of all these precautions, let there come a chance, such as an encore verse, such as some slip or stoppage in the stage machinery, and out will come something, not in the programme, and never heard or seen before, which will bring down a thunder of enjoyment from the audience, and at the same moment fill the managers' box with sorrow and humiliation. There is sorrow to think that for all the efforts to take "the masses" on the upward path, a bit of obscenity has yet such ready power to catch them; and there is sorrow to think that "artists" who can sing songs and dance dances with no real mischief in them (although songs and dances bringing almost insufferable *ennui* when witnessed, perforce, night after night) will yet, for the sake of the fascinating triumph of a "round," interpolate gestures, and interpolate allusions, which degrade themselves and degrade their performances and their audience alike.

Audiences can resent attacks on purity. At the Vic. managers have received letters from some of the *habitués* (poor and rough inhabitants of the "New Cut" as they are) expressing indignation at these momentary offences when they have occurred, and expressing sympathy with the managers to think their efforts at repression have momentarily failed. If the managers can get all the frequenters

* *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens.*

of their house to be of this mind, leading them to rise and hiss a man or woman who offends in the way indicated, the remedy will have come. There is hope of it, for a little leaven leaveneth the whole; and the managers of music halls, not philanthropic, may well hope for the time very quickly to come; since, if at the Vic., there can be morality enough to stamp out immorality, immorality will gradually get stamped out elsewhere, and the managers will, at the same pace, find all their difficulties vanish.

That the Vic. audiences can appreciate good things now good things are put before them is related in my paper, "Up in the Gallery," in *All the Year Round* for July of last year. An account is given there of an evening when some of the students of the Royal Academy of Music presented the first act of Mozart's *Così fan Tutte* (in English), and when the representation was witnessed by the grimy audience enjoyingly.—I am, sir, yours very faithfully,
JENNETT HUMPHREYS.

Cricklewood, N. W., Oct. 14.

THY HEART'S DESIRE.

(For Music.)

<p>With spirit racked by anguish, And a heart that ached with woe, A weary woman trod the streets In the fading sunset's glow. Alas! for a love forbidden; Alas! for the endless strife. "Alas!" she cried, "for my heart's desire, That I never shall reach in life." From the streets to the murky river Her steps had wandered on, And the twilight hush had fallen, The glow of day had gone, Alone by the flowing waters, And her heart and brain on fire; "Oh Death!" she wailed in anguish, "Give me my heart's desire!" By the banks of the murky river Stood a church all dusk and grey; Copyright.</p>	<p>But she shuddered back from its portals, Knowing she dared not pray. And the anthem's solemn music Arose from the white-robed choir: "Oh rest in the Lord, Wait patiently for Him, And He will give thee Thy heart's desire!" The storm-tossed doubter heard it, And her fevered eyes grew dim; She bowed her head by the old church door, For she dared not enter in. Her sad heart throbbed less wildly With its pain and strife and fire; She had learnt who alone could give her Her heart's—her heart's desire. RITA.</p>
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WAIFS.

The book for Mr Mackenzie's promised Birmingham oratorio is from the tried and capable pen of Mr Joseph Bennett.

A New York correspondent, telegraphing on Wednesday, the 3rd inst., states that during the first six hours the sale of seats for Mr Henry Irving's performances realized the sum of 30,660 dols. Some buyers had waited continuously in line since the previous Saturday. Stalls fetched 3 dols. per night, and 60 dols. for the season of twenty-four nights. A telegram with reference to the first day of the issue of tickets in New York runs to the following effect:—"Subscription sale to-day nearly six thousand pounds!" The second day's sale of seats for Mr Irving's season netted 1,200 dols.

There are twenty-three theatres now open in Paris. Turolla has made a hit in Boito's *Mefistofele* at Pesh. Smareglia, composer of *Preziosa*, has completed a new opera. The Italian season at the Teatro Real, Madrid, will open with *Aida*. Mannsfeldt's Gewerbehaus-Concerts, Dresden, have begun for the season.

Antonietta Pozzoni is said to be engaged at the Teatro San Carlo, Naples.

Varesi has been greatly applauded as Rosina in *Il Barbiere* at Warsaw.

Franz Liszt is busily employed completing a new grand oratorio, *Stanislaus*.

Platania has nearly finished an opera entitled *Spartaco*, libretto by Ghislanzoni.

The name of the Teatro Nuovo, Padua, is to be changed to that of the Teatro Verdi.

Weber's *Oberon*, with the Wüllner recitatives, was lately given at the Stadttheater, Leipzig.

Teresina Tua lately commenced, at the Grand Ducal Theatre, Karlsruhe, a nine months' concert tour in Germany, Russia, and England.

Mr Radcliff, the accomplished flautist of the Royal Italian Opera, &c., has gone to Australia.

Millöcker's *Bettelstudent* (under the title of *Il Guitarrero*) has been well received in Leghorn.

Kleinmichel's new opera, *Schloss de l'Orme*, has been well received at the Stadttheater, Hamburg.

An elegant and commodious new theatre was opened on the 26th ult. in Reichenberg (Bohemia).

Paul Viardot, the violinist, has returned to Paris from his successful concert tour in Germany and Russia.

Gayarre met with an enthusiastic reception on his recent arrival in Saragossa, and was afterwards serenaded.

A commemorative tablet has been affixed to the house where Johann Strauss, the elder, resided in Vienna.

According to report, Ponchielli's *Gioconda* is among the coming novelties at the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna.

The St Petersburg Russian Musical Society will, probably, form a special orchestra for their symphonic concerts.

Lola Beeth has appeared with success as the heroine of Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* at the Royal Operahouse, Berlin.

The Teatro Costanzi, Rome, will reopen on the 5th November, the opera being *Dinorah*, with Donadio as the heroine.

A "Kyrie" and a "Credo" by Luigi Mancinelli have been performed with much success in the Cathedral, Bologna.

Great complaints are made of the slowness with which the erection of the new Teatro Comunale, Trieste, is being carried on.

Lhérie has produced a favourable impression in *Hamlet* at Bologna, though the opera itself has been coldly received.

Mozart's *Entführung aus dem Serail* and Donizetti's *Favorita* are among the revivals announced at the Theatre Royal, Dresden.

Gluck's *Alceste* was performed, on the 30th ult., under the direction of Frank, for the first time at the Theatre Royal, Hanover.

Von Bignio opened his engagement at the National Theatre, Pesh, by appearing, on the 11th inst., as Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*.

The management of the Polish Theatre, Posen, has been entrusted to Dr Dobrowolski, editor of the *Diennik poznański*, the leading Polish paper.

Dr Hans Harthan has been succeeded by Cyril Kistler, of Munich, as first professor of the pianoforte at the Conservatory of Music, Sondershausen.

The Katamotomura Theatre, at Yokohama, Japan, has been destroyed by fire, many persons being burnt to death and numerous others severely injured.

Mdlle Adler, a great favourite in Rome, is now in Paris, studying the characters of Ophelia and Lakmé with Ambroise Thomas and Léo Delibes respectively.

The Italian opera season at the Teatro del Principe Alfonso, Madrid, was brought to a close by a performance of *Dinorah*, with Miss Russell as the heroine.

Gürtzmacher, the celebrated violoncellist, has accepted an engagement from Theodor Thomas, with whom he will next year make a long concert-tour in America.

Having completed the alterations in his opera of *Sapho*, Gounod is again working at his grand oratorio, *Mors et Vita*, intended for the next Birmingham Festival.

The Belgian violinist, Eugène Baudot, lately leader in Bilse's Orchestra, Berlin, has been engaged in the same capacity at the Industrial Palace, Amsterdam.

The season was opened at the Stadttheater, Strassburgh, with Bizet's *Carmen*, a novelty in German, though frequently played, three years ago, in the original French.

Waldemar Meyer, the violin virtuoso, who is said to possess a fine tenor voice, has for some time been studying for the lyric stage, on which he will shortly make his first appearance.

Mdme Pauline Lucca opens on the 27th inst., at the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna, in Goetz's *Widerspenstiger Zähmung*, and, on the 30th, she will appear in G. Bizet's *Carmen*.

Johann Strauss, influenced, doubtless, by the only moderate success there of his last buffo opera, *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, has already given up his idea of settling in Berlin and left that capital.

Madlle Orgeni, who has been living for some time in retirement at Riva, on the Lago di Garda, will resume her professional duties by singing at the end of the month in a concert at Dresden.

The veto has been removed from Anton Rubinstein's opera, *Kalaschnikow, the Merchant*, prohibited some years since by the Censure, and the work will now be produced in St Petersburg and Moscow.

Angelo Neumann will next year make a second Wagnerian tour in Italy, when the attraction will be, not the *Nibelungen Tetralogy*, as on his first tour, but *Tannhäuser*, *Die Meistersinger*, and *Tristan und Isolde*.

In consequence of an injury to his right hand, J. Hellmesberger was for some weeks unable to perform his duties as conductor at the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna. At present he has sufficiently recovered to return to his post.

Herr Schubert, director of the Schubert, and Mozart and Beethoven Societies, has returned from his tour on the continent, and will shortly resume his concerts, at which young aspirants to artistic fame will have opportunities of making their *débuts* before the public.

Mr Stephen S. Stratton, whose efforts in the cause of promoting and encouraging a love of English musical art are patent, has commenced his fifth series of popular chamber concerts in Birmingham. At these concerts works by native composers performed by native executants form a special feature.

"JENNY LIND."—On October 6th, 1821, Jenny Lind, the celebrated Swedish nightingale, was born at Stockholm. She was married in America to M. Otto Goldschmidt, and for many years past they lived near London. They now reside at the Winds' Point, near Malvern, and it was only last July that Mdme Lind-Goldschmidt sang for the concert at the Royal Malvern Well Spa, in aid of the G. W. R. Servants' Widows' and Orphans' Fund, when a large and fashionable audience attended, and everyone seemed charmed and delighted.—*Malvern News*.

The Royal Albert Hall Choral Society are already in the field with a spirited programme, and if they succeed in carrying out their plans to the letter, a prosperous season is before them. Wagner's *Parsifal*; Gounod's *Redemption*; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Berlioz's *Faust*; Beethoven's *Mass in D*, and the *Messiah*, and *Judas Maccabeus* are down for performance during the coming season in which ten concerts will be given. Engagements have been made with Madame Albani, Miss Anna Williams, Miss Robertson, Madame Patey, Miss Hilda Wilson, Messrs E. Lloyd, Maas, F. King, H. Pyatt, and Santley.

With reference to the curious addresses on letters recently noticed in *The Globe*, "Gamma" writes that a well-known manager of a London Theatre once put the following address on a letter, which was duly delivered:

"Kind postman bring this letter, pray,
To Ballykill, near Killyleagh—
A pleasant little market town,
That's situate in County Down—
And there, 'mid fields and meadows flow'ry,
Deliver it to J. M. Lowry."

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